

# \*\*\* NEWS RELEASE \*\*\*

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*From the Office of Secretary of the State  
Susan Bysiewicz*

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## **SECRETARY BYSIEWICZ LAUNCHES STATEWIDE TOUR TO HELP VOTERS USE NEW VOTING TECHNOLOGY**

### **DEMONSTRATIONS PLANNED FOR DOZENS OF COMMUNITIES ACROSS CONNECTICUT**

**Hartford:** Wednesday Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz launched a statewide tour to help voters learn how to use new voting technology that will be used in future elections. The tour began at lunchtime in New Haven at Bella Vista, one of the largest senior housing complexes in Connecticut. Sec. Bysiewicz demonstrated how the new optical scan machines work and answered questions from dozens of seniors.

"Much like filling out a standardized test or even a lottery ticket, the practice of filling out an optical scan ballot is something with which most people are familiar," said Bysiewicz. "Still, this statewide tour will help voters, especially seniors, become familiar with the machines and feel confident that their vote will count."

Optical scan voting technology, in which a voter fills out a paper ballot and then scans it into a machine for verification, is the most common form of voting technology in America today, with more than half of the counties nationwide voting on optical scan machines. Optical scan technology also provides a paper trail for every vote cast, in compliance with state law and the federal Help America Vote Act.

Twenty-five Connecticut towns successfully utilized the optical scan machines in the November 2006 elections. This year, the remaining 144 cities and towns will receive their new machines, along with training for election officials.

Between now and the November elections Sec. Bysiewicz will hold dozens of demonstrations and information sessions at senior centers, community rooms, schools,

town halls, and libraries across Connecticut. The first series of visits includes the following dates and locations:

Feb. 21: New Haven – Bella Vista

Feb. 26: Naugatuck – City Hill Middle School Auditorium

March 5: Andover – Senior Center / Old Fire House

March 7: Trumbull Senior Center

March 9: Harwinton Town Hall

March 23: Guilford Senior Center

April 4: Union Town Hall

April 10: Woodbridge Senior Center

April 11: Ridgefield Senior Center

Joyce Hamilton Henry, Executive Director of DemocracyWorks, said Bysiewicz's voter outreach tour is a great idea, "Though using the new machines is a simple process, it's important that individuals take advantage of opportunities to practice prior to the elections. It will help them feel prepared and confident to cast their vote."

"The League of Women Voters encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in their government," said Jara Burnett, LWWCT President said. "Voting is one of the most important ways in which citizens can have their voices heard. We thank the Secretary for her outreach efforts to educate the electorate in the use of the new voting machines and look forward to working with her on this important project."

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